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[54] **APPARATUS FOR GAMES**

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[51] **Int. Cl.**[2] **A63F 3/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **273/275 GA**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 273/130 R, 130 B, 130 F

[56] **References Cited**

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Assistant Examiner—Arthur S. Rose
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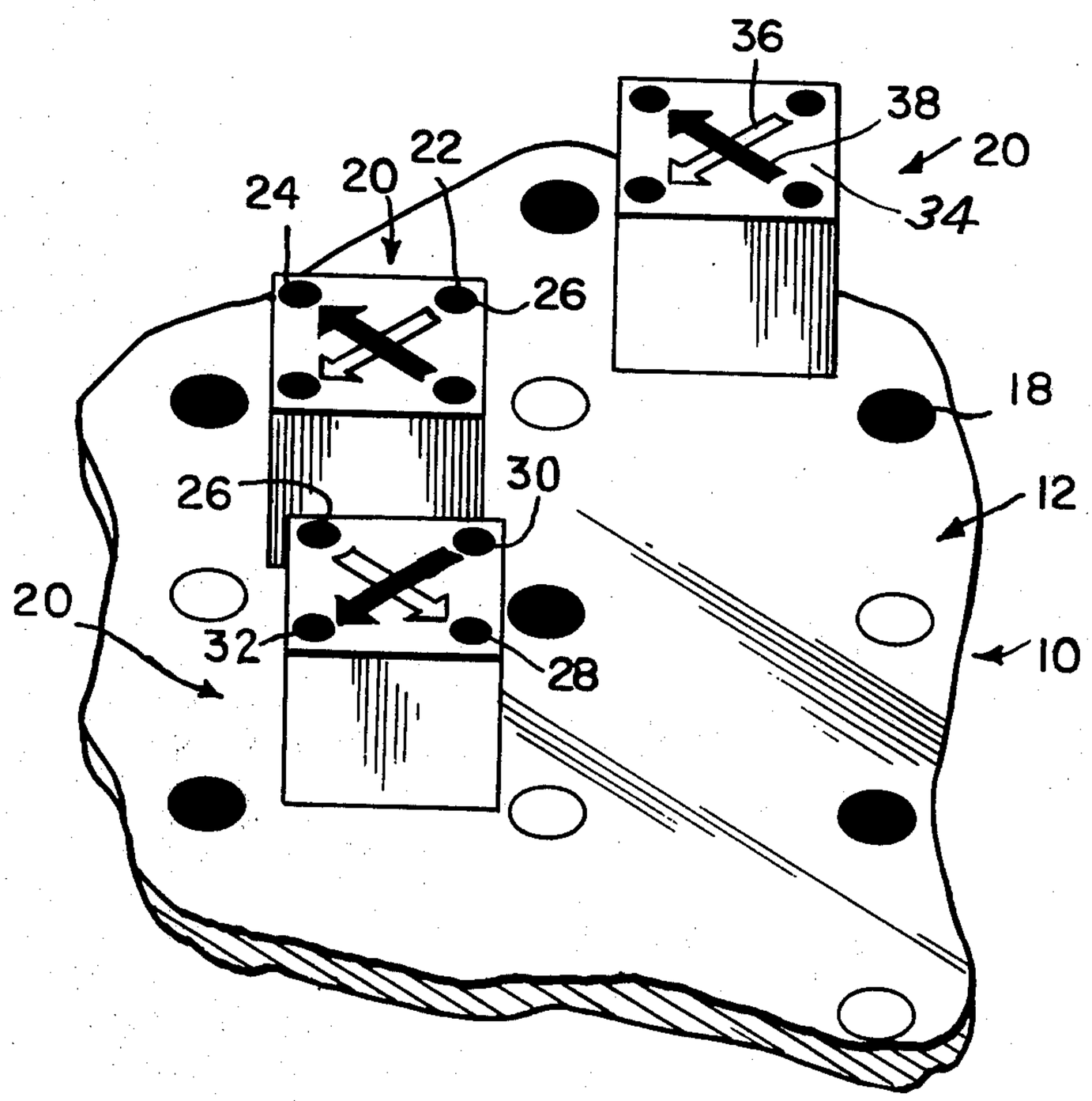
[57] **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus for use in playing a game includes a game board comprising first and second arrays of points. Both arrays are two-dimensional. The first array includes n points in a first direction and $(n + 1)$ points in a second direction, respectively, where n is an integer. The second array includes $(n + 1)$ points in the first direction and n points in the second direction. The two arrays are arranged interjacent one another, and the points of the first array are distinguishable from the points of the second array. The apparatus further includes a plurality of game playing pieces, each of which has two pairs of points defining a quadrilateral array. The points of each pair are located generally across the quadrilateral array from one another. Each piece further includes first and second direction indicators. The first direction indicator indicates a direction between the points of the first pair and the second direction indicator indicates a direction between the points of the second pair. The first direction indicator is identifiable with the points of the first array on the game board. The second direction indicator is identifiable with the points of the second array on the game board.

7 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures



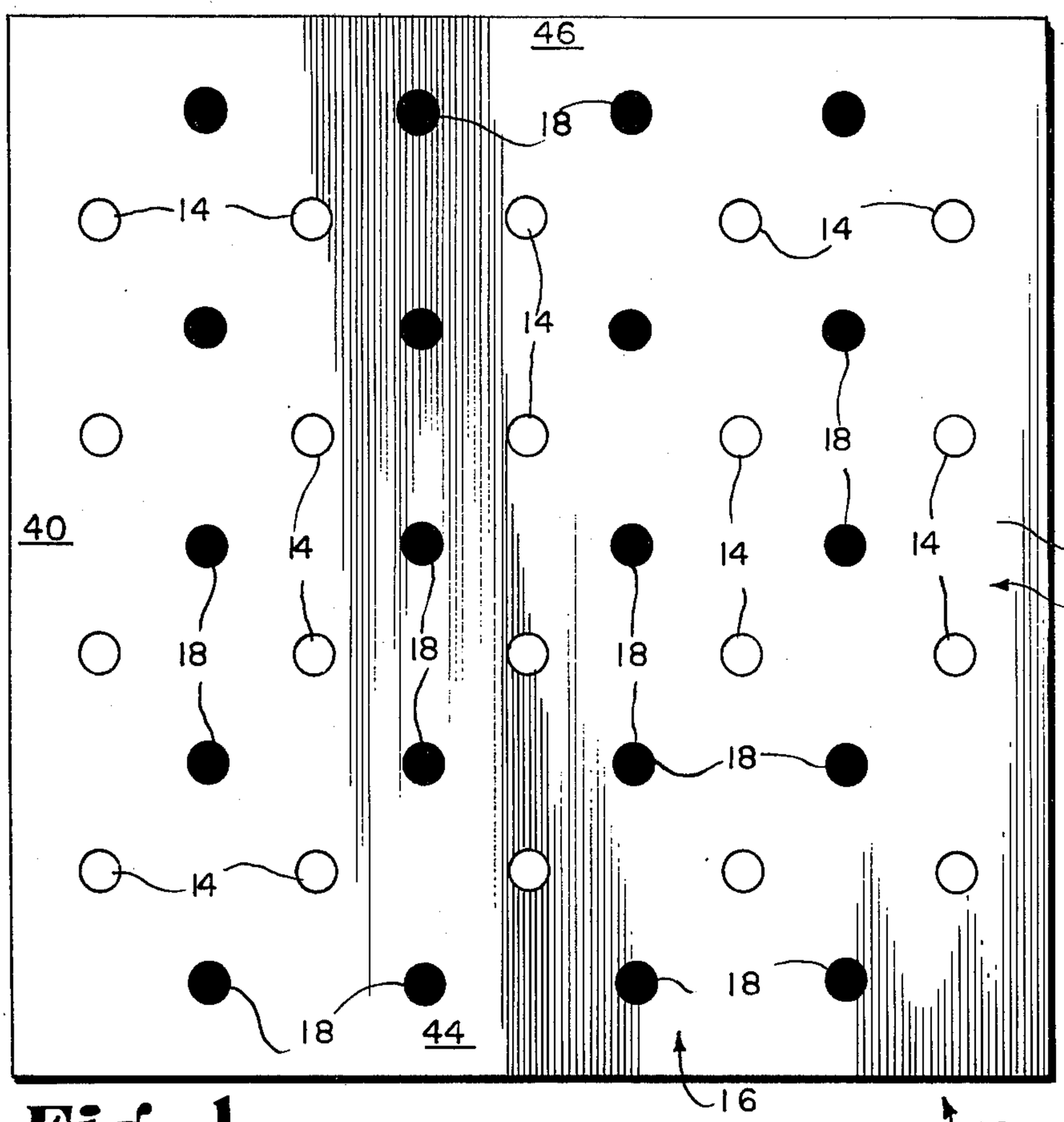


Fig. 1

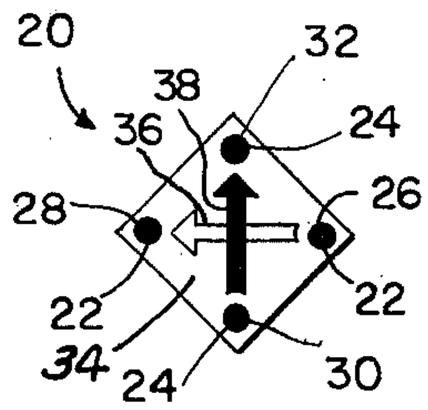


Fig.2

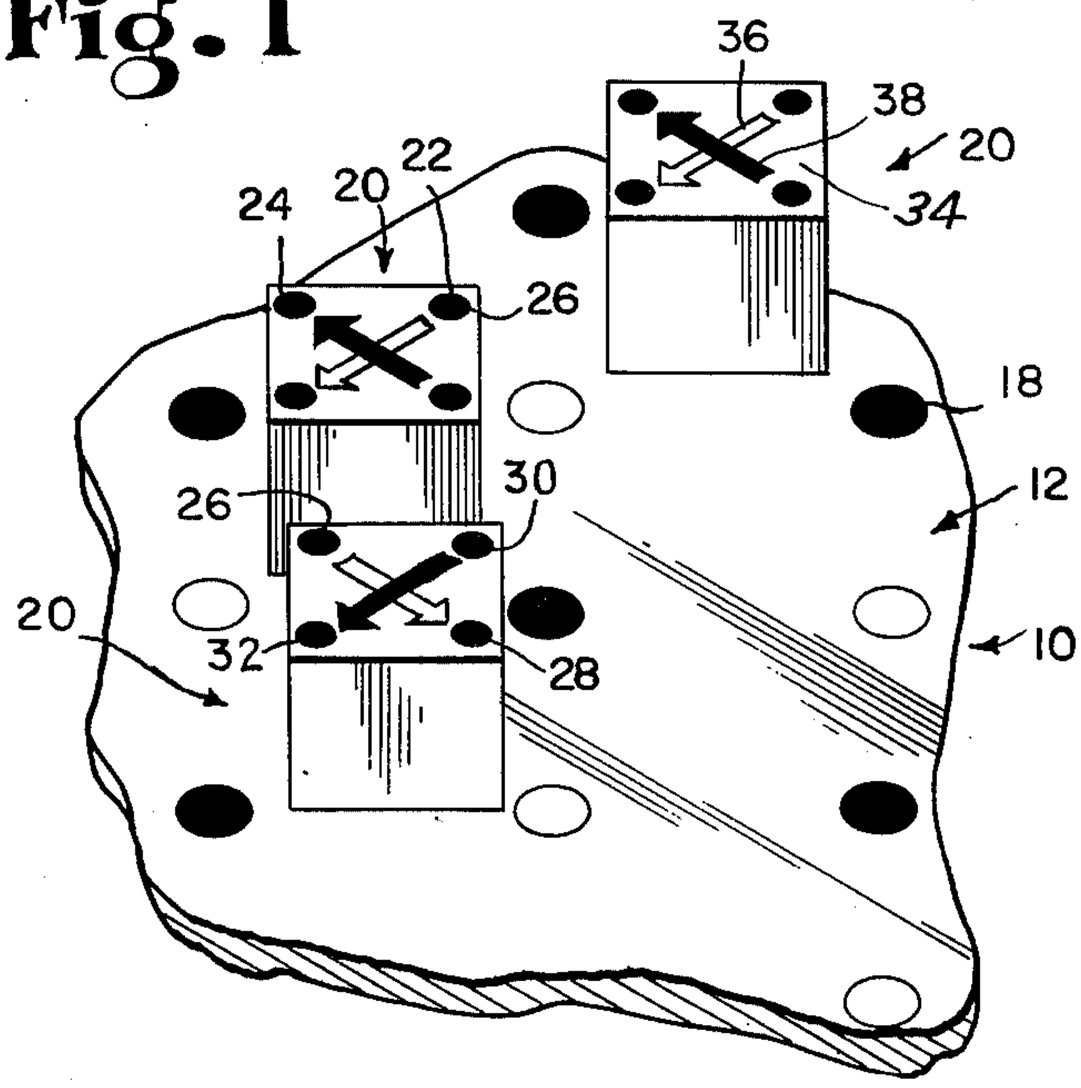


Fig.3

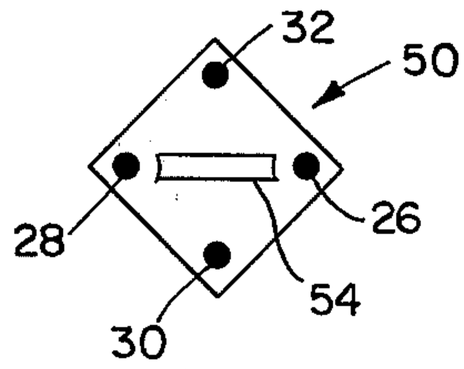


Fig.4a

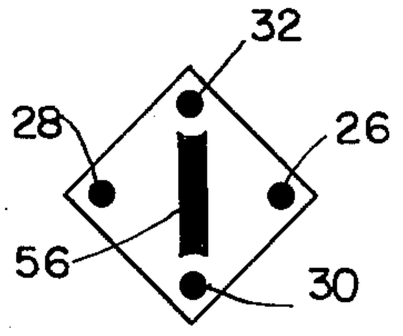


Fig.4b

APPARATUS FOR GAMES

This invention relates to an apparatus which is useful for playing a number of games.

There are several known board games of a structural nature currently on the market. An example of games of this type is the BRIDGE-IT game. The game boards for such games typically include a rectangular array of points. Two opposite sides of the array are designated as belonging to one of the players. The remaining two opposite sides belong to the remaining player. Each player is supplied a number of playing pieces. Each game piece includes a segment of a path so that placement of pieces results in construction of a path. A player places one of his playing pieces on the board to his advantage. Then, the other player places a piece on the board to his advantage, although not in the position already occupied by the first player's piece. The game progresses in this fashion with each player placing game pieces on the board in positions not already occupied. The winner of the game is the first player who establishes a path across the array between his two sides thereof.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a novel variation on games of the type previously described.

According to the invention, the game apparatus includes a game board comprising first and second arrays of points. Each array is two-dimensional. The first array includes n points in a first direction and $(n + 1)$ points in a second direction, respectively, where n is an integer. The second array includes $(n + 1)$ points in the first direction and n points in the same direction, respectively. The points of the first array are distinguishable from the points of the second array.

The game apparatus also includes a plurality of playing pieces, each of which comprises a quadrilateral array of four points. The points are divided into two pairs, with the points of each being positioned diagonally across the quadrilateral array. A first direction indicator extends between the points of the first pair and a second direction indicator extends between the points of the second pair. The first direction indicator is identifiable with the points of the first array on the game board. The second direction indicator is identifiable with the points of the second array on the game board.

In the preferred embodiment, the arrays of the game board and on the game pieces are rectangular. The two arrays on the game board are interpositioned so that, excluding points at the perimeter of the interpositioned arrays, a point on the first array is equidistant from its four nearest neighbor points on the second array and a point on the second array is equidistant from its four nearest neighbor points on the first array.

The invention may best be understood by referring to the following description and accompanying drawings which illustrate the invention. In the drawings:

FIG. **1** is a top plan view of a game board constructed in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a top plan view of a game piece constructed in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. **3** is a perspective view of a fragment of the game board of FIG. **1** with a possible arrangement of a plurality of game pieces constructed in accordance with FIG. **2**; and

FIGS. **4***a–b* are top plan views of game pieces for use in playing variations of a game hereinafter described.

Referring now to FIG. **1**, an arrangement for the game board of the present invention is illustrated. The game board **10** comprises a first array **12** of points **14**, and a second array **16** of points **18**. The points **14** of array **12** are identifiable with one another and are distinguishable from points **18** of array **16**. Points **18** are also identifiable with one another. For purposes of illustration, points **14** are indicated by circles and points **18** are indicated by dots. The points **14**, **18** of the first and second arrays **12**, **16**, respectively, are interpositioned. That is, excluding points **14**, **18** around the perimeter of the interpositioned arrays, each point **14** on first array **12** is equidistant from the four nearest neighbor points **18** on the second array **16**. Further, each point **18** on second array **16** is equidistant from its four nearest neighbor points **14** on the first array **12**.

Each of arrays **12**, **16** is two-dimensional. In a first direction, toward the top of FIG. **1**, array **12** includes four points **14**. In a second direction, from left to right in FIG. **1**, array **12** includes five points **14**. In the first direction, array **16** includes five points **18**. In the second direction, array **16** includes four points **18**. It must be understood that the game board **10** can include any number of points **14**, **18**, as long as this interrelationship between the dimensions of arrays **12**, **16** is met. That is, if the first array **12** has dimensions n by $(n + 1)$ in first and second directions, respectively, second array **16** has dimensions $(n + 1)$ by n in the first and second directions, respectively, where n is an integer.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, a game piece **20** comprises first and second pairs **22**, **24**, respectively, of points. Points **26**, **28** of the first pair **22** and points **30**, **32** of second pair **24** define a quadrilateral array on game piece **20**. In the illustrated embodiment, points **26**, **28**, **30** and **32** are all identified by dots on the top surface **34** of game piece **20**. The dots **26**, **28** of pair **22** are positioned diagonally across the quadrilateral from one another. Dots **30**, **32** of pair **24** are positioned diagonally across the quadrilateral from one another. A first direction indicator **36** extends between points **26**, **28** and indicates the direction toward point **28**. A second direction indicator **38** extends between points **30**, **32** and indicates the direction toward point **32**. Direction indictor **36** is identifiable with points **14** of array **12**. For example, direction indicator **36** and points **14** may be of the same color. Direction indicator **38** is identifiable with points **18** of array **16**. It should be understood that it is not necessary to the apparatus or to play the games hereinafter described that the points **26–32** be marked at all, it being understood that the points are adjacent the extremes of direction indictors **36**, **38**.

A game which is playable with the apparatus of the present invention may be understood with reference to FIGS. **1**, **3**. One side **40** of the game board **10** is designated as a first player's "start" side. An opposite side **42** is designated as the first player's "finish" side. A side **44** of the board is designated as a second player's "start" side. The remaining side **46** is designated as the second player's "finish" side. Each of the players is provided with several game pieces **20**. All of the game pieces for both players are identical. The object of the game, for each player, is to construct a path across the game board **10** from his own "start" side to his own "finish" side before his opponent can do so. Such a path is constructed by placing a plurality of game pieces **20** advantageously on the board with the four points **26–32** on each game piece aligned with four adjacent points **14**, **14**, **18**, **18** on the interpositioned arrays **12**, **16**. The two

players' paths are represented by the first and second direction indicators **36, 38**, respectively. The direction in which either player can trace any path so constructed is determined by direction indicators **36, 38**.

The orientations of the pieces **20** on game board **10**, and the resulting path segments can best be appreciated by referring to FIG. **3**. The first player places one of his game pieces **20** randomly on the board. The piece need not necessarily be at or near his "start" side. The piece is placed to the advantage of the first player. The piece is placed on the board such that the array of points **26–32** defining the quadrilateral on the piece aligns with four points **14, 14, 18, 18** of the first and second arrays **12, 16**, respectively, on board **10**. Thus, as the first player places his first game piece, he defines a path segment in a particular direction for himself, i.e., from his "start" side **40** toward his "finish" side **42**, as well as a path segment in a particular direction, i.e., from the "finish" side **46** toward the "start" side **44**, for his opponent.

Then the second player places a piece **20** on the board in the same manner. The piece is placed to the second player's advantage (and to his opponent's disadvantage). The second piece cannot be placed in a position already occupied by the first player's piece. The players proceed in turn to place game pieces **20** on the board until one or the other has constructed a path from his "start" side to his "finish" side, all of the path segments of which point in the direction from his "start" side to his "finish" side. It will be appreciated that each time a player positions one of the illustrated game pieces **20** on board **10**, he blocks a possible path for his opponent as well as constructing a portion of a path for himself.

With described game proceeding in this manner, one or the other of the players wins. There can be no drawn contests. Further, if either of the players constructs a winning path, but fails to recognize that he has done so, his failure to claim his victory will not be detrimental to him, since his opponent cannot possibly construct a winning path. Additionally, if the game should proceed until all available spaces on the game board **10** are filled by game pieces **20**, one or the other of the players will win.

Other games can be played with game board **10**, game pieces **20**, and some additional apparatus. For example, the players can agree at the beginning of the game that the first player will be equipped with a small number, e.g., two, of additional game pieces **50** illustrated in FIG. **4***a* and the second player will be equipped with an equal number of additional game pieces **52** illustrated in FIG. **4***b*. Pieces **50, 52** include quadrilateral arrays of points **26–32** just as game piece **20**. The points are divided into two pairs **22, 24**. Pieces **50, 52** do not include direction indicators, however. Rather, pieces **50, 52** contain path segments **54, 56**, respectively. Segment **54** extends between points **26, 28** of pair **22**. Segment **56** extends between points **30, 32** of pair **24**. A player uses the segments **54, 56** just as he uses his directional segments **36** or **38** to construct a path. However, a player can trace a path in either direction along path segment **54** or **56** to get from his "start" side of the board **10** to his "finish" side thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. Apparatus for a game comprising a game board having a first array of points, the first array having dimensions n by $(n + 1)$ in first and second directions, respectively, where n is an integer, and a second array of points distinguishable from the first points, the second array having dimensions $(n + 1)$ in the first and second directions, respectively, the points of the second array being interpositioned with the points of the first, and a plurality of game pieces, each piece including a first pair of points and a first direction indicator, the first direction indicator indicating a direction between the points of the first pair and being identifiable with the points of the first array, a second pair of points, and a second direction indicator indicating a direction between the points of the second pair and being identifiable with the points of the second array.

2. The apparatus of claim **1** wherein the first and second directions are perpendicular to one another.

3. Apparatus according to claim **2** wherein a point of the first array on the game board is equidistant from its four nearest neighbor points of the second array and a point of the second array on the game board is equidistant from its four nearest neighbor points of the first array.

4. The apparatus of claim **1** wherein the two pairs of points on each game piece define a quadrilateral array with the points of each pair positioned diagonally across the quadrilateral array.

5. The apparatus of claim **4** wherein the first direction indicator extends generally parallel to a line extending between the points of the first pair, the second direction indicator extending generally parallel to a line extending between the points of the second pair.

6. Apparatus according to claim **4** wherein the quadrilateral array is square, the two pairs of points defining the corners of the square.

7. Apparatus for a game including a game board comprising first and second arrays of points, both arrays extending in first and second directions, the first array having dimensions n by $(n + 1)$ in the first and second directions, respectively, and the second array having dimensions $(n + 1)$ by n in the first and second directions, respectively, where n is an integer and the first and second directions are perpendicular to one another, the points of the second array interjacent the points of the first, and the points of the first array being distinguishable from the points of the second array, and a plurality of game pieces comprising first and second pairs of points defining a quadrilateral array, the points of each pair being located generally diagonally across the array from one another, and first and second direction indicators, the first direction indicator indicating a direction generally parallel to a line extending between the points of the first pair and the second direction indicator indicating a direction generally parallel to a line extending between the points of the second pair, the first direction indicator being identifiable with the points of the first array on the game board and the second direction indicator being identifiable with the points of the second array on the game board.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 4,067,577 Dated January 10, 1978

Inventor(s) Gec ge J. Minty, Jr.

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 1, line 34, change "same" to --second--.

Column 2, line 45, delete "of";

line 66, change "26-32 on" to --26-32 of--.

Column 3, line 34, after "With", insert --the--.

Column 4, line 7 (Claim 1), after "(n + 1)", insert --by n--.

Signed and Sealed this

Sixth Day of *June 1978*

[SEAL]

Attest:

RUTH C. MASON
Attesting Officer

DONALD W. BANNER
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks